

Conservation Compliance for Farmland Preservation Program Participants



Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) participants are required to implement Wisconsin's Soil and Water Conservation Standards for non-point source pollution control, soil erosion control, nutrient management, and tillage setbacks. A summary of the soil and water conservation standards for FP participants is provided below. To view the complete administrative rules governing farm conservation practices and conservation compliance for Farmland Preservation Program participants, visit [ATCP 50.04](#) and [ATCP 50.16](#). The soil and water conservation standards listed below may also be regulated by local ordinances. Contact the Land Conservation Department in the county where your farm is located for more information about local regulations.

Cropland and Pasture Standards

- **Develop and implement a nutrient management plan (NMP) annually in accordance with the NRCS 590 standard**
 - Does not apply to any pasture with one animal unit per acre or less unless nutrients of any kind are mechanically applied to the land.
 - Reoccurring gullies are protected with permanent vegetative cover in cropland and pastures.
Goal: To use all nutrients, such as manure and other fertilizers, to meet crop needs while reducing potential for runoff into surface water and groundwater.
 - **Note:** A nutrient management plan may be prepared in SnapPlus software by a certified nutrient management planner or a landowner who has attended a DATCP approved training course.
- **Cropped fields and pastures meet tolerable soil loss ("T")**
 - "T" represents the maximum average annual rate of soil loss that will permit crop productivity to be sustained economically and indefinitely on a given soil. The average soil loss for a field can be dependent on factors such as soil type, field slope, tillage timing and type, planting equipment, crop rotation, and average rain amounts. Croplands or pastures that are eroding at a rate greater than "T" are not sustainable.
Goal: To preserve long-term productivity of soil and preserve economic viability of farming.
 - **Note:** Field soil loss and "T" values can be found in an NMP completed with SnapPlus or by using USDA-NRCS RUSLE II software.
- **All croplands and pasture meet the Phosphorus Index (PI) standard**
 - PI is a model to estimate the risk of phosphorus that may reach surface water bodies.
 - The model considers: location, soil type, soil test P and organic matter, field slope and slope length, tillage, rotation crops and yields, manure and fertilizer applications, downfield slope to surface water, and distance to surface water
 - All fields (cropland and pastures) must average a PI of 6 or less over the rotation and do not exceed a PI of 12 in any individual year within the rotation.
Goal: Reduce the risk of phosphorus delivered to surface water from agricultural fields.
 - **Note:** The PI for a field is calculated in an NMP completed with SnapPlus.
- **No tillage within a minimum of 5 feet of surface waters**
Goal: No tillage within [a minimum of] 5 feet of the top of bank of surface waters and vegetation is maintained to ensure bank integrity.
 - **Note:** A tillage setback of greater than 5 feet, but no more than 20 feet, may be required depending on site evaluation.



Livestock Standards

Farms with Livestock

- **There is self-sustaining sod or vegetative cover adequate to preserve streambank or lakeshore integrity in areas where livestock have access.**
Goal: Ensure bank stability to limit erosion and sedimentation to preserve water quality.
- **There are no significant discharges of process wastewater to waters of the state from milkhouse waste, feed storage areas or other sources.**
Goal: Limit nonpoint source water pollution to promote water quality.
 - **Note:** A “significant” discharge is based on factors such as volume, frequency, proximity to receiving waters and slope.
- **There are no channels or other visible signs of significant discharge from a feedlot or stored manure into waters of the state.**
Goal: Limit nonpoint source water pollution to promote water quality.

Farms with Manure Storage Facilities

- **Manure Storage Facilities have no visible signs of leakage or failure.**
Goal: Facilities are designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize risk of failure and leakage.
- **Manure Storage Facilities are maintained to prevent overflow.**
Goal: To store manure, agricultural by-products, wastewater, and contaminated runoff within the maximum operating level of the facility to prevent overtopping.
- **Any manure storage facility that has not had manure added or removed from the facility for a period of 24 months has been properly abandoned in accordance with compliance with NRCS standards or has been approved by DNR for continued use.**
Goal: Idle manure facilities be abandoned in compliance with NRCS standards or maintained in an approved manner that will prevent future contamination of groundwater and surface waters.
- **Manure Storage Facilities constructed or substantially altered after 2002 must meet the NRCS 313 standard.**
Goal: New or substantially altered facilities be designed, constructed, and maintained to minimize risk of failure, leakage and to store manure, agricultural by-products, wastewater, and contaminated runoff to provide the farm operation management flexibility for waste utilization and minimize risk of pollutants reaching ground and surface water.

Farms with land in a Water Quality Management Area (WQMA): I.e. Areas within 1,000 feet from a lake, pond, or flowage or 300 feet from a stream, or in areas susceptible to groundwater contamination.

- **No unconfined manure piles in a WQMA.**
Goal: Limit nonpoint source water pollution to promote water quality.
- **Clean water, such as rain or snow melt, is diverted away from all feedlots, manure storage areas, and barnyards within WQMAs.**
Goal: Prevent clean water from comingling with pollutants. Limit nonpoint source water pollution to promote water quality.